

cult subjects than weak men, or average men. It is necessary to satisfy the demands of their larger intellectual nature, and this cannot be done by a weak theology, or a weak statement of a good theology. Your weak theology may save weak men, but the strong man will save your theology by restating it, and making it strong. He will fight your battles at the bar of reason. He will see your system safely through the fiery crucible of criticism. He will give it character, and make it honorable.

If therefore we would create a church literature which leaves nothing to be desired, which would meet the demands of an enlightened age, which would be exhaustive, critical and scholarly, the very first and perhaps most essential step is to produce among us a thoroughly ripe scholarship, and this will not be the work of a day. It must start in the liberal endowment and generous support of our educational work, giving us fully equipped colleges where thorough work can be done. Letters cannot thrive on starvation wages. Scholarship will not grow in a broom-sage field. The hungry stomach theory of education has been laid away in the garret. Those denominations which have been the most liberal in the support of their colleges and pastors, display by far the most brilliant scholarship and the strongest church literature.

When once a church fully and heartily adopts the policy of a liberal support of its brain workers, especially in its educational departments, the question of church literature will take care of itself. Only those who are delivered from the harrassing cares and distracting uncertainties of the world can give themselves so thoroughly to study as to become masters of theological science, or any other science for that matter; deep, thorough men, the peers of the world's strongest, able to stand up before any, and triumphantly uphold the cause of which they are the champions. Men of that kind will create a church literature for you which will live, and which will multiply its life a hundred fold, like the good seed which is scattered into the good ground.

The second essential condition precedent to the creation of a satisfactory church literature is an appreciative people. Of what use would learned and unanswerable works on church life and church doctrine be if they are doomed by neglect to lie in the musty cellars of the publishing house? As the world is now run, if another Paul should arise, rich in soul but poor in purse like the first one, and should find his published epistles left on his hands, with a big debt besides, he

would probably have to stop writing, no matter what mighty anthems and sublime symphonies of thought, and love, and mystery and knowledge burned in his great soul, demanding utterance, and demanding that that utterance should be preserved to future generations.

But we need not fear that when once we have a church literature worth reading, there will not be plenty of readers. Faithful pastors will cultivate their people in this direction. The same general policy which results in the creation of a ripe scholarship, and of a prolific literature as the spontaneous flower and fruit of that scholarship, will at the same time and by the same processes create a demand for that fruit sufficiently liberal to encourage all the effort necessary to produce an abundant supply. The indications are plentiful that the appetite of average church people for serious reading on doctrinal and spiritual subjects, presented in bright and attractive literary forms, is growing into a very healthy and vigorous condition, and by the time another generation is fully in the field, with the larger and wider education which it is now receiving, there will be no cause to complain either of a lack of creditable church literature, or of a trained and healthy taste for it among the laity.

What properly constitutes church literature by no means occupies a limited range. It embraces history, biography, theology, apologetics, exegesis, statistics, and other fields well known to the student. Let them all be thoroughly explored, for like the precious mines which seam the Rocky Mountain steeps, the deeper you go the richer is the gold, and the more abundant is the toiler's reward. Dig deep, refine away the dross, and send the precious truth far into the world on its beneficent mission of charity, and peace, and brotherly kindness.

#### AGAINST OPEN COMMUNION.

G. B. REPLOGLE.

After my article on "The Proper Subject for Communion" on page 4 of the issue of Feb. 27, was in print, I was requested by a very dear brother of California to write something more on the subject. I therefore submit the following: In the discussion of this question a certain principle must be kept constantly in view, as governing the subject. Namely, the new birth, with its antecedents, form and mode.

To impress this fact firmly on the mind of the reader, I ask this question: Can we step beyond the "Word of God," and recognize as members of the body of Christ (the church) men and women who

disbelieve in, and ridicule the ordinance of initiation as given by Christ, the head of the church? This principle when given its proper weight, or bearing on the subject, will, in my opinion, outweigh any and all argument that may be brought forward in favor of what is popularly known as open communion.

I presume that all would be willing to admit that none but members of Christ's church have any right to claim the benefits of the Lord's Supper and Communion. Then why extend the privilege beyond that? Christ in prayer to the Father says, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." Do those who oppose the form and mode of baptism as given by Christ glorify the Lord? Christ says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Matt. 12:30. Shall the enemies of Christ, sailing under false colors, handle the sacred emblems with their unclean hands? Christ in the prayer just referred to, goes on and says, "Holy Father keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one even as we are one." John 17:9-11. Two points are to be specially noted in the scriptures just quoted.

1. Christ invoked the special blessings of the Father upon those only who have become the legitimate members of his body.

2. That there must be a unity which can be fully expressed only by that one word, "one." One in faith and practice; children of the "one" Lord, one faith and one baptism. Why then invite those who make the "Word of God" of none effect by rejecting the ordinances as he delivered them to us, to participate with us in that special love feast which the Lord has sanctified for the benefit of his faithful children only? An indiscriminate invitation presumes, either that Christ has authorized more than one system of initiation, or, that he failed to properly understand his mission as lawgiver; this too, in the face of the indorsement of his Father at the close of his ministry, in the words following, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Matt. 17:5; and the solemn declaration of the Son, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:4. By an invitation without denominational distinction we tacitly indorse every other so-called baptism, from single immersion down to the sprinkling of the unbelieving babe.

Right here I may safely challenge the advocates of open communion to pro-